MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*) : In reply given by the Law Member on behalf of Government he has conceded that the Government is very sympathetic towards my demand so far as the court at Nedumangad is concerned and in case the volume of work justifies its retention there the court will be made permanent. I request the Government that they must see their way that the court is made permanent. Hoping that the Government will be good enough, kind enough and merciful enough to grant the prayer of the people of Nedumangad in this respect, I withdraw the motion.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : Does the House grant him leave to withdraw the motion.

MR. P. C. KURIYAN (*Kottayam I*): I oppose to the motion being withdrawn.

The motion for the withdrawal was then put to vote and carried.

The Resolution was withdrawn by leave.

ALLEPPEY-SHERTALA CANAL.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): Sir, I beg leave to move the following resolution:—

"*This Assembly recommends to Government that Government be pleased to resume the work of the Alleppey-Shertala Canal and complete it*".

Sir, the Alleppey-Shertala Canal has an unhappy and chequered history. This Alleppey-Shertala canal is usually called by the name A. S. Canal. It was started during the administration of Dewan Sir. P. Rajagopala Chari and the work was stopped temporarily during the administration of Dewan Sir. M. Krishnan Nair. The distance between Alleppey and Aroor is 28 miles. The distance from Alleppey to Shertala is 14 miles. The proposed canal was to start from the Vada Canal in Alleppey and to end in Shertala Kayal covering a distance of 14 miles. The whole land necessary for this purpose was acquired by the Government and work was started from both ends; from Alleppey to Shertalla and from Shertala to Alleppey. Nearly 3 miles on each side was cut open and then the scheme was dropped. In answer to my interpellation, Government have answered that the total cost hitherto incurred by Government for the same is Rs. 5,52,803. For land acquisition, it cost the Government Rs. 1,24,638.

RAO SAHIB S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Nominated*) : Is the portion already cut open properly maintained?

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): Not at all. There is only 7 miles yet to be cut open and the estimate for the same as given by the Chief Engineer in answer to my interpellation is Rs. 1,78,000. It might at the first glance appear that this is a wrong figure because for the six miles. Government have spent more than Rs. 4 lakhs while for the remaining 7 miles only Rs. 1,78,000 is required. It may appear to be an inadequate figure. But there is this peculiarity, for the remaining six miles are low, lying paddy fields ; hence there is not much cutting to be effected, whereas the three miles from Alleppey to Shertala and from Shertala to Alleppey the cutting had to be effected in very loose sandy places.

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Sir, for appreciating or propeply understanding and then to come to a decision by this House on this fairly big scheme whether it should be completed or not certain peculiar conditions obtaining in Shertalla have to be taken into consideration. On the eastern portion of the Shertalla taluk there is the Vembanad Lake and on the Western portion there is the Arabian sea. The coastal region, I mean the western portion, is extremely fertile and best suited for cocoanut cultivation. From Anthakara Bar to Arathukal, a distance of 8 miles just on the eastern side of the beach there is what is known as *Pozhichal* and this House is familiar with the Anthakara *pozhi* which is closed for certain period of the year for the purpose of cultivation at a cost of Rs 6 to 7 thousand rupees. During the opening of that Bar manure such as dead fish and other manure of the sea freely get into this *Pozhichal* which is just like a canal 6 to 7 miles long and by the time the Bar is closed it settles down and becomes one of the richest kinds of manure. It forms a layer of rich clay. Even the Chief Secretary, while he was the Director of Agriculture, has remarked that this clay-soil is perhaps the richest soil in Travancore. During the monsoon people take this rich soil from the water and carry it into the interior parts of the country where the soil has very little manure. For that purpose, means of communication must be effected. I can anticipate a possible objection from the Chief Engineer that there is the Shertala-Aroor road and therefore there is no necessity for opening this canal. Sir, the roads serve only for motor traffic and for pedestrians and not for agricultural purposes, for carrying goods or for removal of additional sand or for bringing in of manure. Water communication is the only cheap means of communication which will serve the poor agriculturists. The portion west of Alleppey-Shertala canal is an extensive tract of loose sandy soil where no cultivation can be effected. This portion covers only 6 miles in extent. So if there are some facilities, what the agriculturists do is to remove this excess sand and get the level of the property lowered and then utilise it for paddy cultivation for a certain period in the year. If the canal is opened, we can utilise an extent of 20,000 acres for cultivation purposes.

MR. PACODE A. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Vilavankod*): Is cocoanut plantation carried on there ?

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): Here and there cocoanut trees are planted as a back-yard cultivation.

MR. A. TANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum-Rural*): Is it because cocoanut trees will not thrive there that it is not carried on on a large scale ?

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): In the interior regions we have to water them for about six months in the year. In every compound we will have one or two tanks, but that can be done and maintained properly only where there is not too much excess sand. In the eastern portion, thousands of acres have been registered. During the administration of Dewan Rajagopalachari extensive areas were auctioned and people got it registered in their names and they are paying tax for them. I mean portions of Vembanad lake along the coast. These tracts await reclamation. This can be done profitably only by conquering large quantities of sand from the interior of the taluk where there is a surplus of the same.

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RAO SAHIB S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Nominated*): Is it on the eastern side or on the western side of the Shertala taluk?

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): It is on the eastern side of the Shertala taluk and on the wertern side of the Vembanad lake.

So that I may confidently say that, if this canal is cut and completed, it will prove to be a great source of irrigational facility and thousands of acres will be brought under fresh cultivation and Government also stand to gain.

Another objection that may be raised by the Government is that, if the whole canal is completed, it will be a costly canal regarding annual maintenance. Loose sand from the sides of the canal will get into the canal during winter season and the maintenance for removing it will be very much. My submission to this is that, if we go through the budget of the P. W. D., we will find that there are in this State itself instances where a mile of road is being maintained at a cost of Rs. 1,750. I can assure the House that there will be no prohibitive cost to maintain this canal. The proposed canal route begins in my friend Mr. K. M. Krishnan's constituency and ends in my constituency and we have been assured by the Agricuitural Association of that locality that the work can be completed by them if the Government are also sympathetic and half of the cost is borne by the P. W. D. They have also assured the Government that they have no objection to have a toll on the boats that pass through the canal.

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*): Is there any place wherein Government have not established a toll on account of the objection of the people of the locality?

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): No. I only anticipated what the Government might do.

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): May I know the reason why Government stopped the work?

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): In fact no reason is alleged. Government will launch into these things without any definite idea. They have spent a few lakhs. What is the use of maintaining a costly department spending on an average nearly 37 lakhs of rupees unless the department has experts, to go into these things in detail? After spending nearly Rs. 5 lakhs it is insulting the people to say that ultimately Government are of opinion that the construction of the canal need not be completed. I can assure the House that the majority of the people living in the neighbourhood of the canal are agriculturists and they have got considerable experience in these matters. We need not take any lesson from other people. The agriculturists assure that it will be a great boon to them. Incomplete work will do them harm because the level of water in the finished portion of the canal will be lower than in the adjacent garden land. The sand being loose, water will easily pass into the lower level of the land and cause damage to the cocoanut cultivation. But once the canal is completed one end touching Shertala Kayal and the other the Alleppey-Vadai canal there will not be that source of danger. There will be ebb and flow and the

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water level in the Kayal and the Canal will be the same. The maintenance of the canal will also be less costly. Puthenthodu in Shertala itself the Kuthiyathodu and the Poochackal canal have created irrigational facilities to the agriculturists without doing any harm to the people.

I wish to place only one more fact for the consideration of the House. After the completion of the Alleppey-Aroor road in the course of nearly last 6 years 25 coir factories have been established on the sides of the road which give employment to more than 50,000 people. If we have the cheaper water communication for carrying these goods how much more rapidly Shertala would have developed situated as it is between Alleppey and Cochin two of the most commercial centres on this coast?

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon I*): May I know from the member whether in that case shipping from Cochin will not be resorted to more frequently than from Alleppey if the canal route is the cheaper means of communication to Cochin?

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): There will be no such danger. Because even now from Shertala to Aroor which is half the distance from Alleppey to Aroor there is cheap water communication and it covers nearly 15 miles. There is nothing to prevent even now merchants to take their goods from Alleppey to Cochin along the back waters.

RAO SAHIB S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Nominated*): What has been done with the lands already acquired by Government for the canal.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): They have been given on Kuthakapattom.

There is also another pitiable aspect of the whole thing. Now in Alleppey and Shertala the canal is left incomplete without bridges and without proper maintenance. Last year there were one or two drowning cases when school children were trying to pass the canal (*President's bell*).

MR. K. M. KRISHNAN (*Ambalapuzha II*): സർ, ഞാൻ ഈ പ്രമേയത്തെ പിൻതാങ്ങുന്നു. ചേർത്തല-ആലപ്പുഴ തോട്ട്, ചേർത്തലനിന്നും മൂന്നു മൈൽ തെക്കോട്ടും ആലപ്പുഴനിന്നും മൂന്നു മൈൽ വടക്കോട്ടും ഇങ്ങനെ ആറു മൈൽ ദൂരം ഗവണ്മെൻറിൽനിന്നും വെട്ടിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഇടയ്ക്കുള്ള ഏഴുമൈൽ ദൂരം മാത്രമാണു ഇനി വെട്ടിത്തീർക്കാനുള്ളത്. ഇതേ സംബന്ധിച്ചുള്ള സകല കാര്യങ്ങളും എന്റെ ബഹുമാന്യസ്നേഹിതൻ മി. പദ്മനാഭമേനോൻ പറഞ്ഞു കഴിഞ്ഞു. അദ്ദേഹം പറഞ്ഞ കാര്യങ്ങൾ ക്രോഡീകരിക്കുകൂടി ഞാൻ ഇവിടെ പ്രസ്താവിക്കാം. തോട്ട് വെട്ടിത്തീർത്തു പൂർത്തിയാകാതെയിട്ടിരിക്കുന്നതുകൊണ്ട് അതിനുവേണ്ടി ചെലവാക്കിയ

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[Mr. K. M. Krishnan]

സംഖ്യ ജനങ്ങൾക്കോ ഗവണ്മെൻറിനോ യാതൊരുപയോഗവും ഇല്ലാതെ പരമാർത്ഥത്തിൽ ഗവണ്മെൻറു നഷ്ടപ്പെട്ടുത്തുകയാണു ചെയ്തിരിക്കുന്നതു്. ഇതിനും പുറമെ ഈ തോടു് ഇപ്പോൾ ഈ നിലയിൽ ഇട്ടിരിക്കുന്നതുകൊണ്ടു ജനങ്ങൾക്കു പല ഉപദ്രവങ്ങളും നേരിടുന്നുണ്ടു്. ആലപ്പുഴനിന്നും വടക്കോട്ടു ഏകദേശം മൂന്നു മൈൽ ദൂരം തോടു വെട്ടിയിട്ടുണ്ടെന്നു ഞാൻ പറഞ്ഞുവല്ലോ. വർഷകാലത്തു വലിയ വെള്ളപ്പൊക്കമുണ്ടാകുന്ന അവസരത്തിൽ വടക്കുനിന്നു തോട്ടിലേക്കുള്ള വെള്ളപ്പാച്ചിലിൽ മണ്ണു് ഒലിച്ചു തോട്ടിൽവീണു ഏകദേശം ഒരു മൈൽ ദൂരംവരെ ആണ്ടുതോറും നികന്നുപോകുന്നുണ്ടു്. തോട്ടിൻെറ സമീപത്തുകൂടി വെട്ടിയിട്ടുള്ള റോഡിനും ഇതുകൊണ്ടു സാരമായ തകരാറുകൾ പറ്റുന്നു. തോട്ടിൽ വീഴുന്ന മണ്ണു് വാരിക്കളയുന്നതിനും റോഡിൻേറയും തോടിൻേറയും സംരക്ഷണത്തിനും മറ്റുമായി ആണ്ടുതോറും ഒരു നല്ല തുക ഗവണ്മെണ്ടു ചെലവാക്കുന്നുമുണ്ടു്. ക്രമാതെ അനേകം സ്ഥലങ്ങൾ യാതൊന്നിനും കൊള്ളാതെ പാഴായിപ്പോകുന്നതിനും ഇതു കാരണമാകുന്നുണ്ടു. വർഷകാലത്തു തോടിൻെറ ഇരുകരകളിലുമുള്ള പുരയിടങ്ങളിലെ വെള്ളം തോട്ടിൻെറ ലവൽ പുരയിടനിരപ്പിൽനിന്നും താണതാകയാൽ തോട്ടിലേക്കു ഭൂമിയിൽക്കൂടി ഒലിച്ചുപോകുന്നു. അതിലുള്ള വളങ്ങളെല്ലാം ആ വെള്ളത്തിൽക്കൂടി തോട്ടിൽ വീഴുകയാണു ചെയ്യുന്നതു്. അതിനാൽ അത്തരം സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ ഉള്ള തെങ്ങുവൃക്ഷങ്ങളിൽനിന്നും ഫലം യാതൊന്നും ഉണ്ടാകാതേയിരിക്കുന്നു. തോടുവെട്ടി പൂർത്തിയാക്കിക്കഴിഞ്ഞാൽ കായലിൽനിന്നും ഏറ്റവും ഇറക്കവും ഉണ്ടാകയും തന്നിമിത്തം ഈ ദുഷ്യം പരിഹരിക്കപ്പെടുകയും ചെയ്യും.

ചേർത്തല താലൂക്കിലുള്ള അന്ധകാര അഴിയിൽനിന്നും അനേകം ആളുകൾ വളം കൊണ്ടുവന്നു തെങ്ങുകൃഷിക്കും നെൽകൃഷിക്കും ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്നുണ്ടു്. ആലപ്പുഴ-ചേർത്തല തോടു പൂർത്തിയാക്കിയിരുന്നാൽ എത്രയും ആദായകരമായി ഈ വളം കൊണ്ടുവന്നു് തങ്ങളുടെ കൃഷിക്കു് ഉപയോഗപ്പെടുത്തുവാൻ ജനങ്ങൾക്കു സാധിക്കുന്നതാണു്. ഞാൻ ഒരു വസരത്തിൽ അന്ധകാരഅഴിയിൽനിന്നും വളം കൊണ്ടുവരുവാൻ ശ്രമിച്ചു. വേമ്പനാട്ടുകായലിൽ കൂടി വളഞ്ഞു തിരിഞ്ഞു് ആ വളം കൊണ്ടുവരേണ്ടിയിരുന്നതുകൊണ്ടു് അതിലേക്കു കൂടുതൽ ചെലവു ചെയ്യേണ്ടിവന്നു. അതിനാൽ ആ ഒരൊറ്റ പരീക്ഷണത്തോടുകൂടി എൻെറ ആ വഴിക്കുള്ള ശ്രമവും അവസാനിപ്പിച്ചു. അന്ധകാരയഴിക്കു സമീപം

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ഒരു പൊഴിയുണ്ട്; ഒരു പൊഴി മാത്രമേയുള്ളുതാനും അ പൊഴിയിൽ നിന്നുമാണു വളം കൊണ്ടുവരേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നതു്.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Are there large quantities of manure?

MR. K. M. KRISHNAN (*Ambalapuzha II*): ഉണ്ടു്; ധാരാളമുണ്ടു്. അന്തകാരയഴി തുറന്നുകിടക്കുന്ന അവസരത്തിൽ കടലിൽനിന്നും പൊഴിയിലേക്കു ചെളി അടിഞ്ഞു കയറുന്നു. ആ പൊഴിയിൽ കിടക്കുന്ന ചെളി നല്ല ഒരു വളമാണു്. ഉപ്പുള്ള ചെളിയായതുകൊണ്ടു തെങ്ങിനും നെല്ലിനും അതു ഒരു നല്ല വളമായിട്ടാണു് കണ്ടുവരുന്നതു്. തോടു വെട്ടിത്തീർത്തിരുന്നെങ്കിൽ ആ വളം ആലപ്പുഴവരെയുള്ള ജനങ്ങൾക്കുകൂടി ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്നതിനു സൌകര്യപ്പെട്ടമായിരുന്നു.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): ആ വളം എതു താലൂക്കുകളിലെ ആവശ്യങ്ങൾക്കായി ഉപയോഗിക്കാൻ കഴിയും?

MR. K. M. KRISHNAN (*Ambalapuzha II*): ചേർത്തലനിന്നും ആലപ്പുഴവരെയുള്ള സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ വളം കൊണ്ടുപോകാം.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum*): അതല്ലാ ഞാൻ ചോദിച്ചതു്. ആ പൊഴിയിലുള്ള വളം എതു സ്ഥലത്തെ ഉപയോഗത്തിനു മതിയാകും?

MR. K. M. KRISHNAN (*Ambalapuzha II*): പത്തു പന്ത്രണ്ടുപങ്കുതികളിലുള്ളവക്കു ആ വളം ഉപയോഗപ്പെടുത്താം.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): അവിടെയുള്ള വളം വാരി എടുക്കുന്നതോടും കടലിൽനിന്നും ചെളി അടിഞ്ഞുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുകയല്ലയോ?

MR. K. M. KRISHNAN (*Ambalapuzha II*): അടിഞ്ഞുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കും.

സർ, ഈ തോടിനുവേണ്ടി ഗവണ്മെൻറു് അഞ്ചേമുക്കാൽ ലക്ഷം രൂപാ ചെലവാക്കിക്കഴിഞ്ഞു. ഇനി ഒന്നേമുക്കാൽലക്ഷം രൂപാകൂടി ചെലവാക്കിയാൽ അതിൻെറ പണി പൂർത്തിയാക്കാമെന്ന നിർണ്ണയിക്കപ്പെട്ടിട്ടുമുണ്ടു്. ഇതുയും വൻപിച്ച ഒരു തുക ചെലവാക്കിക്കഴിഞ്ഞിട്ടു ഈ തുകകൂടി ചെലവാക്കുവാൻ ഗവണ്മെൻറു് മടിക്കുന്നതു് ഒരിക്കലും ബുദ്ധിപൂർവമല്ലെന്നാണു് എനിക്കു പറയുവാനുള്ളതു. എതുയും വേഗത്തിൽ ഇതിൻെറ പണി പൂർത്തിയാക്കിക്കൊടുക്കുന്നതുകൊണ്ടു് അതു ജനങ്ങൾക്കു് ഏറ്റവും ഉപകാരപ്രദമായ ഒന്നായിരിക്കും എന്നുള്ളതിനു സംശയമില്ല. വേണമെങ്കിൽ ഈ തോട്ടിൽക്കൂടിപ്പോകുന്ന വാഹനങ്ങൾക്കു് ഒരു ചെറിയ കരംകൂടി ഏർപ്പെടുത്തുന്നതിനും വിരോധമില്ല.

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MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla II*): ഈ തോടിന്റെ സംരക്ഷണച്ചെലവിലേക്ക് ആണ്ടുതോറും എന്തുതുക വേണ്ടിവരും എന്നാണു മെമ്പർ വിചാരിക്കുന്നതു്?

MR. K. M. KRISHNAN (*Ambalapuzha II*): ഇപ്പോൾ ചെലവാക്കുന്നതുകയുടെ പകുതിത്തുക ചെലവാക്കിയാൽ നിശ്ചയമായും തോടിന്റെ മെയിൻറനൻസ് നിർവഹിക്കാം. ഇപ്പോൾ തോട്ടിൽ വീണുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന മണ്ണു നീക്കംചെയ്യുന്നതിനു ഗവണ്മെൻറു് ഫണ്ടിൽനിന്നു തുക ആണ്ടുതോറും ചെലവുചെയ്യുന്നുണ്ടു്. തോടിന്റെ പണി പൂർത്തിയാക്കിക്കഴിഞ്ഞാൽ അങ്ങിനെ മണ്ണു വന്നു വീഴുവാൻ എളുപ്പമില്ല. അതുകൊണ്ടു് ഇത്രയും ചെലവുചെയ്യേണ്ടിവരികയില്ല. മെയിൻറനൻസിനു വേണ്ടി സ്വല്പംവല്ലതുംചെലവുചെയ്താൽ മതിയാകും. അതിനാൽ ആ കാര്യത്തെപ്പറ്റി അത്രവളരെ ഭയപ്പെടാനില്ല. ഈ തോടിന്റെ പണി എത്രയുംവേഗം പൂർത്തിയാക്കിത്തരണമെന്നു ഞാൻ ഗവണ്മെൻറിനോടു് അപേക്ഷിച്ചുകൊള്ളുന്നു.

MR. G. NILAKANTAN (*Nominated*): Sir, if the canal is completed it is said, firstly it will be giving facilities for irrigation and secondly facilities for navigation.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil II*): May I know whether the member supports or opposes the motion?

MR. G. NILAKANTAN (*Nominated*): I want neither to support nor to oppose now. I wish to make a few observations.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The member thinks that he will be able to make a contribution to the discussion. Is that so?

MR. G. NILAKANTAN (*Nominated*): Yes, Sir.

If the canal is completed, it has to be connected with the lake. During the flow tide, all the water in the canal will flow out and the canal will not be useful for navigation. During the ebb tide, salt water will get into the canal and the water then will not be useful for cultivation. Further it is said that the construction of the canal will drain away the sub-soil water to the ruin of the cocoanut trees on either side of the canal.

MR. KAINIKKARA M. PADMANABHA PILLAI (*Changanachery I*): May I know whether the member knows of any canal in Travancore which is not ultimately connected with a lake?

MR. G. NILAKANTAN (*Nominated*): No.

MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*): Sir, I shall be failing in my duty if I do not offer a few remarks on the resolution now under discussion.

MR. T. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara II*): Are they going to be in support of the resolution or against it?

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MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*) : The Honourable Member will please patientily wait, and then find out my position when I finish my speech.

Mr. Nilakantan seems to be under a misapprehension that this canal, when completed, will open out into the sea and that there will be the ebb and the flow coming in. Sir, even if this canal is completed, there will be a distance of about 25 miles more to the sea. There is no immediate connection to the sea. This canal opens into the Vembanad lake, which joins the Arabian sea about 25 miles off, at the Cochin Harbour. When the Anthakara bar is opened during seasons, no doubt, there will be through connection with the sea ; but I do not think the tides will affect this canal appreciably.

MR. G. NILAKANTAN (*Nominated*): Is there no direct connection with the sea even when the *Anthakara* bar is closed ?

MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*) : As I said, that is only at the Cochin Harbour, and not anywhere near the mouth of this canal , and the Cochin Harbour is about 25 miles from the mouth of this canal. So far, about the tidal question referred to by Mr. Nilakantan.

Sir, this canal, if completed, will open up the interior of the Shertala taluk.

MR. G. NILAKANTAN (*Nominated*) : Will not the sub-soil water on either side of the canal be dragged in if the canal is cut open ; and will that not prejudicially affect the cocoanut cultivation on either side of the canal ?

MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*) : I will come to that.

Sir, at present, there is no communication between the eastern and the western portions of Shertala. It is true that there is the Alleppey-Aroor road ; but it runs through the middle of the taluk and is not of much use to the people living in the interior of the taluk. This canal, if completed, will connect the eastern and the western parts of the taluk. The means of communication in the taluk will improve very much. It will be admitted on all hands that water communication is the cheapest.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum-Rural*) : What is the distance between the road and this canal ?

MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*) : It varies between 1 mile and 3 miles in various places in the taluk.

MR. G. NILAKANTAN (*Nominated*) : What will the people do for transporting their goods for these three miles ?

MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*): This canal must be connected with a net-work of roads.

RAO SAHIB S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Nominated*) : Since water communication is cheaper, should there not be cross-canals ?

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MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*): After getting this straight canal, we will agitate for cross-canals.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara*): Does the member expect the Government to satisfy all such needs of Shertala?

MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*): That is our wish.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: We are now concerned only with the question whether this House will pass this resolution. What the Government will do is not a matter for this House to consider. We need not anticipate the action of the Government. Let us concern ourselves with this resolution.

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): Roughly, what is the amount of land tax collected from the Shertala taluk?

MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*): I am not quite sure; it is about Rs. 1½ lakhs. It is a question for the Land Revenue Commissioner to answer.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: That question does not arise.

MR. PACODE A. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Vilavankod*): How will the completion of this canal affect the public health of Shertala?

MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*): That is a matter for experts; I am only a lay man.

RAO SAHIB S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Nominated*): Will it be worse than what it is?

MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*): Certainly not.

In regard to the point raised by Mr. Nilakantan, as to whether the sub-soil water on the lands on either side of the canal would not be drained into the canal thereby affecting the cocoanut plantations on either side, that also is a matter for an expert. I cannot make any positive statement on that point. I have my own doubts.

Sir, my point is that the interior of Shertala should be opened up. At present, we have to depend upon lorries for transport of most of our goods to Alleppey. If this canal is cut open, transport will become easier and much cheaper.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum-Rural*): How far is the canal from the lake?

MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*): The distance varies in various places.

Sir, the Government have spent a sufficiently large amount for the acquisition of land necessary for this canal and have already cut open a few miles on either end of the proposed canal. It is only fair on the part of the Government to finish the work and make it useful for the people. Even though a sufficiently big amount is annually spent for the maintenace of this canal, it is allowed to be silted up and the banks on either side are allowed to be washed into the canal, being unprotected. If it is allowed to be in its present state, not that is it not useful but it is a positive nuisance

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to the people who live on both the banks of the canal. It only serves as a breeding place for the musquitoes thereby making it a menace to the problem of health of the people of the place. Sir, with these observations I support the resolution.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara*): Sir, I am really in a difficult position as to whether I should support the resolution or oppose it; and I am going to come to a decision after hearing the official member on the points I am going to raise.

Government have spent over Rs. 5 lakhs on this work long ago. It is left incomplete. We have often pointed out that the Government must have some definite policy with regard to the execution of works by the P. W. D. This is an instance where public money is proved to have been wasted.

MR. G. NILAKANTAN (*Nominated*): Cannot experts commit mistakes?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara*): Then, they are no experts.

In the circumstances, Sir, the burden, of proving that the present incomplete condition of the canal serves public interests, is upon the Government. Certainly, they must have had very good reasons for starting this costly scheme. We have not yet had any explanation for dropping it in the middle.

This is the work which has to be done by Travancore labourers, so that there is no chance of any portion of the money spent flowing out of the country. Further, it is said that it will open up the interior of Shertala about which we hear so much, so often, even in this House. All things considered, unless the Government convince us that the expenditure involved in completing the canal will be out of all proportion to its utility, they must complete it.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I shall give one piece of information, Mr. Asan. For a long time, the pendulum was swinging between a road and a canal.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara*): I do not know that.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I give the member that information.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara*): I am not sure about it. Further, I do not think that a road can be a substitute for a canal.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: There were proposals both for a road and for a canal, and the Government for some time were considering both of them. A canal was begun; later on, that was dropped and a road was taken up.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara*): The road has been completed, Sir. Still there is sufficient scope for further roads. Mr. Krishna Panickar said that he would like that all the demands of the people of Shertala are satisfied immediately. It was argued that, if the canal is completed, there will be a demand for more roads and that, if more roads are opened there will be a demand for further roads. Sir, that argument is not acceptable for leaving the canal incomplete. There will be such increasing demands as long as we are on the path of progress.

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MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon I*): I wish to raise just one point. I am in doubt with regard to that, and I expect the official member to clear it.

I wish to know what would be the effect on the Alleppey Port if this canal is completed, since water communication is cheaper than roads. Will not the completion of the canal enable the people of the Shertala taluk to send up their products direct to the Cochin Harbour through this canal after it is completed ? That would mean that business will flow direct to Cochin instead of to Alleppey as at present. I know, Sir, that all the receipts of the Alleppey and Cochin Ports are pooled together, and that we get only our share out of the total receipts.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): Is there not back water communication even now from Shertala to Cochin?

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon I*): That is risky. The goods will have to be insured, which means two annas for every Rs. 100 worth of goods. And, the Harbour charges are higher at Cochin than at Alleppey.

All that I said was that I am not quite sure of the position. I have my own doubts. I request the official member to explain this position so that I can make up my mind about this resolution.

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): Sir, I oppose the resolution. Before I say anything on the resolution, I will answer Mr. Kunjukrishna Pillai's question. He asked—will the Alleppey Port be affected? I think it will be affected inas much as goods will be carried right through to Cochin.

MR. K. P. KRISHNA MENON (*Parur*) When the opening of the canal was first taken up, was this not considered ?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): I was not here at the time.

MR. K. P. KRISHNA MENON (*Parur*): I am asking the Government.

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): I know this that business people in Alleppey now send goods to Cochin through the backwater route for loading at Cochin rather than loading at Alleppey : and if we make the route to Cochin easier, they will perhaps send most of their goods to Cochin. The question why it was dropped is not a difficult problem. Actually the estimate for the thirteen miles of the canal was Rs. 5,11,870 and the work was started in 1913. After five miles and 3,000 feet had been cut, the expenditure amounted to Rs. 5,52,803. So that there is about 8 miles of the canal still to be dug, while the amount of the estimate has already been spent One of the causes for this, I am afraid, is due to land compensation. The estimated cost of the land was Rs. 300 an acre, but the average price as per the award came to Rs 2,484.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): Have not the Government paid compensation for all the lands already ?

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MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*) : Sir, as far as the Public Works Department is concerned, the land that has been handed over to it is for the value of Rs. 1,20,000.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*) : Will the member take the information from me that the whole of the land value has been paid years ago ?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*) : The information that I have is regarding the land that has been taken over by the Public Works Department; and that certainly does not represent the whole of the land through which the projected canal would run.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum – Rural*) : May I know whether any portion of that land has been let out on lease ?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*) : Sir, I have no knowledge with regard to that.

The utility of the proposed canal is really a big point. Mr. Krishna Panickar, I am afraid, rather changed his mind about it. He assured me some time ago that a lot of people told him that the canal if opened would drain the water from the adjoining lands and that the garden lands will be affected.

MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*) : May I inform the member that even now in my speech I indicated that the matter whether the water in the adjacent lands will percolate into the canal and thereby be adversely affected is a matter for the department to consider and decide one way or the other. I made that specifically plain even in my speech.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : I want to give a direction which I hope the official benches will be able to comply with. I do so because I consider some information absolutely necessary for the disposal of this question by the House. Mr. Padmanabha Menon stated that all the land acquired for the purpose was paid for. The Chief Engineer stated that he is aware of a certain sum being paid, but he was not able to deny what has been stated by Mr. Padmanabha Menon. In these days of telephone, and in the light of the fact that all the important heads of departments are here it will be a good thing if the Government will be able to place before this House definite information on the subject.

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*) : Sir, I am referring to the Public Works Department. As far as this resolution goes, the Public Works Department have charge of the land to the value of Rs. 1,20,000.

RAO SAHIB S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Nominated*) : Does the member mean to say that more lands will have to be acquired if the canal is taken up ?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*) : More lands will have to be handed over to the Public

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[Mr. G. B. E. Truscott.]

Works Department, lands that are possibly in possession of the Land Revenue Department. There are quite a lot of people who say that the canal will drain the water from the fields adjacent to it and that it will ruin the fields.

There is another point to be considered. If that canal is constructed—

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA NENON (*Shertala I*): May I know whether the member has received any representation either from the people in the constituency protesting against the opening of the canal or doubting about the utility of the canal?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): There are a lot of petitions that have been received regarding the construction of this and other canals.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): Sir, I wish to say a word by way of personal explanation. Evidently the Chief Engineer is confounding—

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: That is not a personal explanation.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum-Rural*): Is there anything to show that the fertility of the trees along the six miles of the canal that has been constructed has been affected?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): I do not know whether there were any trees along the canal when it was constructed; but I do know this that the people doubt the utility of the canal for garden purposes.

I was going to say that the only use of the canal would be to serve just between the two places, Alleppey and Shertala. We should have to construct cross-canals as well, if we want the fields to be saved.

Then again Mr. Padmanabha Menon compared the question of maintenance of the canal and roads in the southern division. Actually two miles of the canal at the Alleppey end is maintained at almost the cost of many of the main roads; the maintenance at that end is Rs. 1,688 at Rs. 600 per mile and the Shertala end for about 4,300 feet is also maintained at the rate of Rs. 600 a mile. But I cannot now say what the maintenance charge will be if the canal is cut through. I doubt whether the mover himself would propose any addition to the present cost of maintenance.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): What is the annual maintenance charge for the Kuthiathode canal?

MR. G B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): Sir, I am very much inclined to think that the canal which the mover referred to is not complete. As regards the maintenance of it, I really have no idea of what it would cost. But it will possibly come to something about Rs. 200 a mile.

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The mover also anticipated the remark that I was going to make that, when the canal was stopped, it was decided to build a road from Alleppey to Arur at a cost of something over two lakhs of rupees. Whether it is necessary to complete this canal or not is certainly open to doubt. That it should be completed now I consider it impossible owing to the cost; and before anything further is done, it will really be necessary to investigate not only the cost of construction and the cost of maintenance but also whether, with the present day traffic, the canal will not have to be considerably widened and whether it is going to do any damage to the adjoining gardens by the draining of ground water into the canal. So I cannot believe that the House will pass this resolution.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum—Rural*): What is the cost of maintenance of the Alleppey-Shertala road?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings, and Irrigation*): About Rs. 6,000 at Rs. 500 a mile. I think that is all I have to say.

MR. KAINIKKARA M. PADMANABHA PILLAI (*Changanachery I*): Do the Government propose to investigate into the matter and arrive at some conclusion in regard to it?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): Sir, the present is not a good time for investigation because special staff will have to be appointed and the scheme itself will cost several lakhs.

It is not a good time at present to do anything of this sort. We have no funds to construct it. Therefore what is the use of spending money for appointing a staff for investigating the work?

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara*): Could not the existing staff conduct the investigation?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigaiion*): No, besides, what is the use of spending money for investigation, when there is no likelihood of finding funds for doing the work?

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandram—Rural*): May I know whether the work was ordered to be taken up by the Dewan without technical advice?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): It was ordered to be taken up by one Dewan and it was another Dewan who stopped it.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): May I know whether the Chief Engineer and other officers went to the spot and found the work was necessary?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings, and Irrigation*): It is a question of funds at the present time; and I cannot say that the Government can undertake the expenditure on it.

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MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): Have not Government received a representation from the people of the taluk saying that they are prepared to complete the canal at a cost of Rs. 1·20 lakhs?

MR. G. B. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings, and Irrigation*): That figure is based on a rather sketchy estimate prepared some time ago and I do not believe the canal could be completed for that amount.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): That figure was given on the floor of this House.

RAO SAHIB S. PARAMESWARA AIYAR (*Nominated*): Has it been proved that the estimate was wrong?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings, and Irrigation*): No estimate for the completion has been prepared, but I cannot believe that the remaining eight miles can be completed for Rs 1,20,000 when the five miles already built cost over Rs. 5,00,000; again the canal would very probably have to be widened and this would further increase the cost.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): Sir, the reply of the official member clearly proves one fact, namely, that the canal was begun by an irresponsible Government and it was dropped by an equally irresponsible Government and that the present official member is thoroughly ignorant of the salient facts of this work.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Is it not a strong way of putting it?

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): Sir, hard facts automatically draw out strong language. I call a spade a spade; that is all. What the people of my constituency desired is not the completion of the canal blindly, which may do more harm than good. They want Government to go into the question carefully. If ultimately it is found to be a thorn on the progress of the taluk, the scheme may be dropped.

MR. G. B. E. TRUCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings, and Irrigation*): I rise to a point of order. I was speaking on the resolution as tabled which the honourable member seems to alter now. The resolution asked for the completion of the canal. Now the member wants Government to investigate the taking up of the work.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): I am saying that the Government had not even the courtesy to say that they will go into the question sympathetically.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Mr. Menon, Mr. Truscott points out that the resolution merely says that the canal should be completed. So the Chief Engineer says that any question of further investigation does not arise. That is the objection raised. If Mr. Menon means by using the word "investigation" only the investigation of the question whether it should be completed or not, that could be allowed.

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*): Sir, I wanted to say that there are experts under the Government such as

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the Director of Agriculture, the Chief Engineer and the Water Works Engineer. They could go to the locality and find out whether the fears, imaginary or otherwise, with which Government are obsessed, are warranted by facts and local conditions. They can investigate whether those misgivings have any real basis. Then it will be time enough for this House to say whether it should be dropped or not.

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings, and Irrigation*) : What is the use of investigation when there is no possibility of funds being allotted for some years together ?

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*) : If it is of urgent necessity, funds must be found. Otherwise, you must remove from the landscape that mosquito breeding portion ; I mean, the half-cut portions of the canal must be levelled up. The other day the Health authorities in Alleppey found it difficult to keep clean the Alleppey-Shertala canal banks. It is now the breeding-bed of mosquitoes. Sir, this is a very serious matter affecting the irrigational, the agricultural and the commercial interest of Shertala and Alleppey.

MR. KAYALAM PARAMESWARAN PILLAI (*Additinal Head Sirkar Vakil*) : Not sanitary ?

MR. EDAVANATT S. PADMANABHA MENON (*Shertala I*) : If it is any consolation to the Law Member, I will add that also.

I do not propose to press the motion. I request Government that they will be pleased to reconsider the situation and try to turn into use the huge amount of public money wasted by the government.

The resolution was by leave withdrawn.

LEASE OF KANNI ELAM LANDS.

MR. K. A. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Todupuzha* cum *Devicolam I*) : Sir, I move the following resolution .

This Assembly recommends to the Government that lands in the Kanni Elam tract be leased out to the applicants under the existing rules.

Sir, two days ago, on a cut motion, the salient features regarding the necessity of leasing out lands in the Kanni Elam tract were pointed out by me. There remains now only one or two more points in connection with this resolution.

MR. S. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil I*) : What is the meaning of "Kanni Elam" ?

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : That matter was explained a day or two back. You need not explain that now.

MR. K. A. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Todupuzha* cum *Devicolam I*) : The economic aspect of throwing open the Kanni Elam tracts has to be considered. There are something like 25,000 acres of land remaining unopened and Government can get a revenue of a lakh of rupees.

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